

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact:**

Ellis Smith  
esmith@chattanooga.gov  
770.331.7191 (cell)

### **City to require masks in city-owned buildings**

*Amid rising COVID-19 infections, masks to be once again required in all city-owned buildings*

**Chattanooga, Tenn. (July 30, 2021)** — Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly on Friday issued an executive order mandating that employees and visitors who are moving within city buildings wear facial coverings, effective Monday.

Mayor Kelly's executive order also requires that community centers remain closed indefinitely following summer camp. The order allows temporary exceptions for vaccine drives held at community centers, and for elections.

The renewed facial covering requirement for city buildings came amid rising COVID-19 infections in Hamilton County, which had previously dipped but have been on the rise in recent weeks, particularly among the unvaccinated.

Facial coverings are required for all individuals, whether vaccinated or not, while they are moving through city buildings, such as walking to their desks, or moving through common spaces. Exceptions to this "masks in motion" rule will be made for vaccinated individuals while they are working alone in a room, or are socially distanced per CDC guidelines.

Dr. Mary Lambert, Chattanooga's director for community health, has repeatedly warned that the Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus is having a devastating effect on younger, healthier people, even those who have previously had the virus and survived it.

"This virus is spreading as fast as chicken pox, and the health effects of this mutated COVID-19 virus — even on younger individuals — are appalling and costly," Dr. Lambert said.

"Unvaccinated people in the emergency room are begging for the vaccine, but for far too many of them it's far too late."

Chattanooga's community centers will remain closed until either the city's vaccination rate reaches 70 percent, up from 43 percent currently, or until the velocity and number of COVID-19 cases reverses its current troubling trend, Kelly said.

The city is offering \$100 to employees who submit proof that they have been vaccinated, and has made free, walk-in vaccination clinics available across the city.

Free Covid-19 vaccines will be available on a walk-in basis in the Downtown Library Auditorium every Monday from 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. through Monday, August 30, 2021.

Free vaccines are also available on a rolling basis in Chattanooga's Community Centers, using the below schedule:

- August 4 — Hixson (2nd shot) from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- August 11 — Brainerd from 10 a.m. to noon
- August 11 — Westside (2nd shot) from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- August 18 — South Chatt from 10 a.m. to noon
- August 18 — Tyner from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- August 25 — John A Patten (2nd shot) from 10 a.m. to noon
- August 25 — Glenwood (2nd shot) from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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